Bruce Bingham, M.S.

Intermountain Regional Inventory and Monitoring Coordinator

Bruce Bingham comes to his new position from the USDA Forest Service where he was assistant program manager for the Interagency Regional Monitoring Program, associated with the Northwest Forest Plan. Working with eight federal agencies, Bruce coordinated several activities for the program, which monitors the northern spotted owl, the marbled murrelet, the amount and distribution of old-growth forests, watershed condition, and other indicators of the health of the Pacific Northwest forests. This experience prepared him for his current job of developing monitoring programs for the National Park Service.

Earlier in his career, when Bruce did research as a vegetation ecologist for the USDA Forest Service, Pacific Southwest Research Station, he worked under Dr. Barry Noon, who was involved in conceptual modeling for the NPS prototype monitoring programs. Bruce has also worked for The Nature Conservancy managing three preserves. All of his previous work has been in the Pacific Northwest, but he expects that the move to the new region will not be a problem. "The Intermountain Region is huge and contains lots of diversity, like the Pacific Northwest. Although many of the ecosystems are different from those of the Northwest, learning to understand systems and monitoring them are similar challenges in every region."

"I'm really excited to be working here because of my strong belief in the mission of the National Park Service."

Bruce had just taken his new post at the time of this writing. He says he is looking forward to his role as I&M coordinator. "I'm really excited to be working here because of my strong belief in the mission of the National Park Service." ■

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PROFESSIONAL PROFILES
resource monitoring

John E. Gross, Ph.D.

Ecologist

Selecting ecological vital signs, the species and other factors that reflect the integrity of an ecosystem, is a formidable challenge. Meeting this challenge requires scientists with the broad expertise to understand whole systems and the interactions of their parts. John Gross has this expertise. Hired through the Natural Resource Challenge as an ecologist, his job is to provide scientific support to Inventory and Monitoring Networks throughout the National Park Service as they develop their monitoring programs, and to coordinate scientific activities across the networks. One of his tasks is to see the big picture: how the larger landscapes in which parks are embedded influence their resources, and how the many parts of the system are connected. Monitoring networks need this information to identify candidate vital signs that will effectively support decisions on management of park resources.

John has a strong background in quantitative ecology and systems modeling, which has sharpened his ability to think holistically about ecosystems—considering all the parts and how they fit together. "That's what excites me, and that's what the Inventory and Monitoring Program is all about," he says.

His early research focused on behavior and ecology of large mammals, including studies of native goats (ibex) in the deserts of Israel and Pakistan and in the Swiss Alps. In the United States, he has studied ecosystem ecology in western national parks and elsewhere. Before coming to the National Park Service, John was a landscape ecologist in Australia studying tropical savannas in the extensive outback of northern Australia and the sustainability of small, yet complex, household farming systems in Indonesia. In those studies, he used a highly integrative systems approach to understand how environmental and social factors influence ecosystem sustainability. When it comes to learning about ecosystems and human influences on them, John says, "I'm like a kid in a candy store. It all looks good to me. I'm interested in all sorts of stuff." ■

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